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Cooperative effort

Festival success is tribute to community spirit

Mother Nature simply will not negotiate.

And she won't make promises, either.

That's one of the toughest lessons Festival Director James Geitzen of JAG Entertainment has learned during the past few years as he plans the annual Plymouth Ice Festival.

"We hope for the best weather possible, sunshine and the high 30s, but we just never know," Geitzen said.

Geitzen has spent the past six months in negotiations and planning sessions, along with Frank Agostini of E.G. Nick's restaurant, to ensure the success of the 34th Annual Ice Festival which usually brings 75,000 to 100,000 people to downtown Plymouth during the weekend.

They have planned and replanned and Geitzen spent about a hundred or so hours on the phone ensuring that every detail of the displays, the ice, the activities, the warming centers and the entertainment were under control. He admits, however, that he has given up on attempting to understand or predict what the weather will do.

"We had a forecast that it was going to be warm and rain the whole weekend a few days ago. Then that was changed to cold temperatures and light snow. We just never know," he said.

No matter what the weather does, Geitzen said, visitors will again see their favorite events like the ice carving chain saw competitions and the displays throughout Kellogg Park. Geitzen has added a few twists to keep the event fresh and entertaining and kept the favorites that attract the crowds annually.

"There is something for everybody during the weekend," Geitzen said. "We have a play area for kids with interactive displays sponsored by Kroger, the Ford Experience displays, the party tent for the over 21 crowd. We think everybody is going to have a good time."

Geitzen, who also produces the summer concerts in Kellogg Park through his company, said that the Ice Festival is one of his favorite events because it offers such a diversity of attractions. He said the Sun and Snow skiing lessons for youngsters is always a huge attraction and that the lessons will take place even if the snow has to be man made.

"We are in negotiations to make that happen."

Snow making, however, isn't inexpensive but may be necessary. Geitzen said that the expense is even more serious since the Ice Festival is completely funded by donations and sponsorships.

"No taxpayer or city money is ever used. The sponsors put this event on from start to finish and pay the costs to keep it free for visitors," Geitzen explained. That means a lot of phone calls to local businesses and industries and a lot

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Festival from page 1

of bills to pay, he added.

"It costs about $100,000 to put the festival on, to pay for the ice, the carvers, the insurance and the city services. We pay the city for the police, fire department, Huron Valley Ambulance, the DPW to handle the trash and all that parking signage and enforcement, along with some pretty steep equipment rentals and insurance," he said.

"We couldn't do this without these sponsors. These people step up and really give back to the community. They are what make this the special event that it is," he added.

This year, that spirit of giving back will be prevalent throughout the event.

"The Ice Festival has been looking for some charity involvement over the past few years and we are really excited to have not just one but three charities working with us this year," Geitzen said. "Locally we have the Plymouth Community United Way doing a winter clothing drive.

James Geitzen

"We also have the local Habitat for Humanity resale store accepting donations and scheduling pickups during the event.

On a regional level, The Ford Fund and Gleaners Food Bank have teamed up for a text to donate program. During the festival, visitors can Text the Word FORD to 41444 and Ford will match their donations to Gleaners," Geitzen said.

All in all, I think it will be a great event, no matter what the weather does. The Ford exhibit and the ice sculptures in town and in the park are worth seeing, and there is going to be a lot to do and see.

"When you bring this many people to town, you want to make the best impression possible. I think we will do that again this year," Geitzen said.

"After all, the Plymouth Ice Festival was started to bring people to downtown Plymouth in the winter 34 years ago, and it does that each and every year. It has now turned into an essential part of what makes the Plymouth community unique," he concluded.

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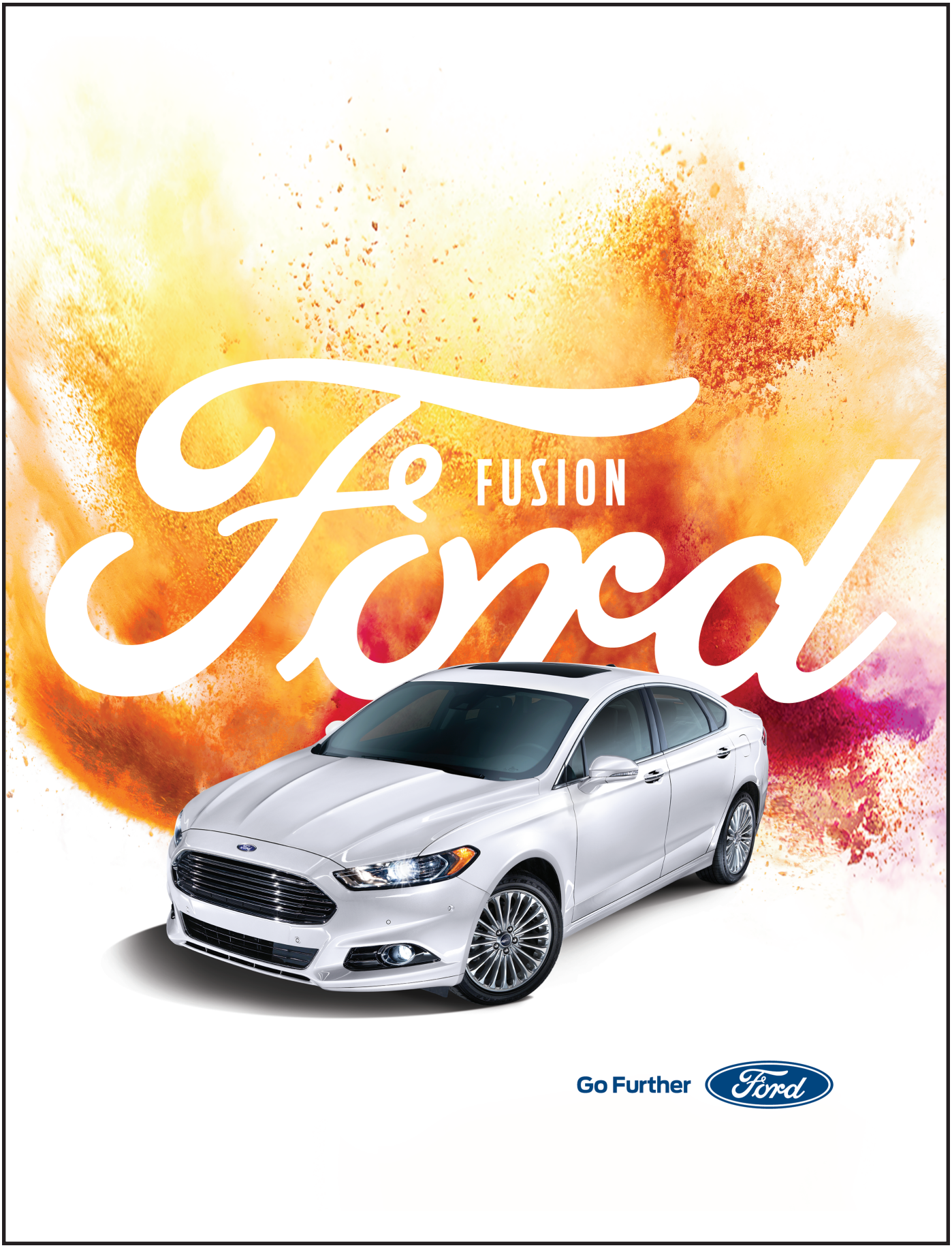
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Ford Motor Co. adds excitement to event

The Plymouth Ice Festival is always one of the most exciting events in the community and this year it will be imbued with a special spirit of community with the involvement of Ford Motor Co. as the premier sponsor.

According to Festival Director James Gietzen of JAG Entertainment, working with Ford Motor Co. this year has enhanced the usual sense of excitement and brought a whole new atmosphere to the 34th Annual Plymouth Ice Festival.

"It has been great working with Ford Motor Co. Having them on board definitely brings a certain excitement to the event," Geitzen said. "Ford will not only have the largest exhibit where you will be able to interact with staff and new Ford vehicles, they will also have the largest ice carving in the park, featuring the new Ford GT," he added.

> *The design was crowd-sourced through Ford Motor Co. social media channels and will be revealed on the first night of the festival.*

Ford is also sponsoring the Dueling Chainsaws event, one of the most popular attractions of the weekend, Geitzen said.

Marisa Bradley, Ford Motor Co. consumer and broadcast media communications manager, said that the involvement of the automaker fits well with the company mission.

"At Ford Motor Co. we are proud of our heritage and commitment to carry on Henry Ford's unique vision that not only made personal transportation affordable, but left a lasting impact on communities where his employees and customers lived," she said.

"As part of our on-going community commitment, Ford is proud to be able to contribute to the 2016 Plymouth Ice Festival."

Ford will bring the largest, must-see sculpture to Kellogg Park, according to Geitzen. The design was crowd-sourced through Ford Motor Co. social media channels and will be revealed on the first night of the festival, he said.

Bradley added that Ford is also

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sponsoring the wildly popular Dueling Chainsaws which takes place at 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9. In this exciting competition ice carvers are given 15 minutes, one block and their chainsaws to create ice carvings, hoping to be named the champion at the event.

"As part of Ford's involvement at the festival, we're also teaming up with Gleaners Community Foodbank of Southeast Michigan to make sure people don't face hunger issues this winter by matching donations to Gleaners," Bradley said. "Traditionally after the holidays many food banks and shelters have food shortages so Ford will match donations made during the festival. A $20 donation to Gleaners will feed a local family for a week and can be made by texting the keyword FORD to 41444," she added.

"During the past five years, Ford Motor Co. Fund has contributed more than $1.7 million to Gleaners Community Food Bank as part of its commitment to hunger relief in southeastern Michigan. Gleaners operates four Ford Mobile Food Pantries, and the Ford Resource and Engagement Center in southwest Detroit includes a Gleaners client-choice food service hub. The Ford Volunteer Corps also has enlisted thousands of Ford employees over the years to sort, pack and deliver meals at Gleaners locations," Bradley said.

"With the involvement of Ford Motor Co. and the other charities participating this year, the Ice Festival has evolved into an essential part of what makes the Plymouth community unique," Geitzen said.

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Plenty to see

Favorite attractions, new features set for 34th Plymouth Ice Festival

The official opening ceremony for the 34th Annual Plymouth Ice Festival will take place in Kellogg Park at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 8 when members of the city commission will be in attendance to cut the ribbon welcoming visitors to the event that annually draws national attention.

The lights in the Ice Garden in Kellogg Park will be turned on for the first time, bathing the ice sculptures in the park with color. The lighting is sponsored by DFCU Financial and will continue each night through the festival weekend exhibit.

A new event this year sponsored by Kroger is the Ice Festival Playground, full of interactive ice carvings for children to enjoy. Festival organizers said there would be plenty of photo opportunities for parents at this "really cool" playground.

> *"It's pretty exciting. I mean, men brandishing chain saws, attacking ice blocks. What more can I say?*

The exciting and nerve testing Dueling Chainsaw competition will take place this year at 7 p.m. on Saturday. Competitors are given a block of ice and 15 minutes to create an ice carving judged to be the best. Chain saws roar, ice chips fly and spectators gape in amazement every year at this event noted James Geitzen, festival director.

"It's pretty exciting. I mean, men brandishing chain saws, attacking ice blocks. What more can I say?"

The Plymouth Community United Way will be sponsoring a Winter Clothing Drive during the festival this year and hope to set a record for the largest amount of winter wear collected during one weekend.

The organization hopes to fill the bed of a pickup truck, the use of which was donated by Blackwell Ford, with new or handmade hats, gloves and scarves. The cold-weather wear will be donated to agencies serving the home-

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less and low-income individuals in the area. Items should be taken to the United Way booth on Penniman Avenue during the festival. New coats, blankets and socks will also be accepted.

The college carvers will be back this year as the festival again partners with local colleges and universities for the traditional College Carving Competition. The event will be sponsored by Genisys Credit Union this year and will take place in Kellogg Park under the watchful eyes of judges who are experienced professional carvers.

The Individual College Carving Competition will take place Saturday, Jan. 9 from 9 a.m. until noon and the team competition is planned for 8 a.m. until noon Sunday, Jan. 10. Awards in both categories will be presented at 1 p.m. the day of the competition.

Genisys is sponsoring several interactive ice sculptures throughout the park which are ideal for the infamous "selfie" photographs.

This year, the Ice Festival will include a 3-mile family walk/run beginning at 8 a.m. Saturday Jan. 9. Runners

See **Sights,** page 9

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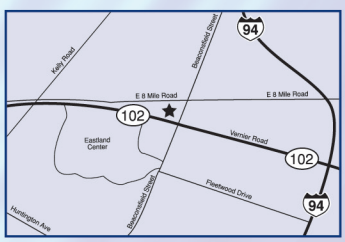

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Sights from page 7

and walkers can gather in the park across from Panera at 7:45 a.m. for a group photo at 8 a.m. The run/walk will start promptly at 8:02 a.m. organizers said.

The route starts and finishes in Kellogg Park and there are both 5 and 7 mile routes. Sun and Snow Sports will offer music, coffee and hot chocolate.

No registration is required and for the free event and kids, baby joggers and dogs are all welcome. The event is free.

More information is available at www.RunDTP.com

The Z Spot will offer a Hot Zumba dance party at noon Saturday on the Main Stage where there will be entertainment, awards ceremonies, presentations and music throughout the weekend.

Again this year, Reyka Vodka will

present Fire and Ice when two ice towers are set afire Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. The ice towers will burn for approximately two hours each evening, organizers said.

As has become a tradition, Sun and Snow Sports will offer the Cross Country Zone in Kellogg Park directly across from their shop on Main Street.

Sponsored by Blue Care Network of Michigan, seasoned professionals will demonstrate and explain the gear and theory of cross-country skiing and then give kids the chance to try it for themselves. Gear will be provided at no rental fee by Sun and Snow.

The Cross Country Zone will be open from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. Saturday and from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Sunday.

The Plymouth District Library will feature a free live musical performance by Maria Cimarelli and Mark Vondrak, accompanied by Amanda Sabelhous. The performance is a production of the Michigan Opera Theatre and will take place at 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9. No reservations are required.

See **Sights,** page 10

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Sights from page 9

The library is located at 223 S. Main St.

Organizers urged visitors not to miss the Hot Spot, heated by Ehlers Heating and Air Conditioning located under The Gathering directly across from Kellogg Park.

The Hot Spot will feature local vendors, businesses, product demonstrations, a sitting area and lots of heat.

The Plymouth Library will also offer a warming spot during regular hours and the Plymouth Historical Museum will have hours for the latest exhibit, The American Experience. For more information about the museum hours and exhibit, access http://www.plymouthhistroy.org.

And after hours at the festival?

The over-21 crowd can be found at the most anticipated and largest party in downtown in the party tent behind E.G. Nick's restaurant on Forest Street.

There will be a warm tent, cold beer, drink specials and live music. E.G. Nick's is also the spot to see the Svedka Vodka Ice Bar and lounge on the patio.

The Party Lot will be open from 7 p.m. until midnight Friday and Saturday and will feature a live band in the tent both nights.

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Just PARC it

New arts and recreation complex to offer warmth, refreshments

Lisa Spielman
Special Writer

The Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex (PARC) will be open as a warming station during the Plymouth Ice Festival to give festival goers an opportunity to see first-hand what happens when community support, committed individuals, organizations and volunteers combine hard work and efforts.

According to PARC President Don Soenen, the complex will be open to the public as a warming station from noon to 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9 and from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 10. Visitors will be able to access PARC from the front of the building as well as the rear activities entrance.

"We'd (PARC) like to make the festival even more of a success," said Soenen.

See **PARC,** page 12

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PARC from page 11

Inside, there will be

- Kids games
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- Complimentary refreshments
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- A chance to win free fitness class packages from Z Spot Fitness
- A backstage look at Forever After Productions
- Public restrooms

Organizers also hope the event will help the community warm up to the idea of a community arts and recreational facility.

Since the inception of PARC, when the non-profit organization purchased the former Central Middle School in July of 2015, the goal of PARC organizers has been a collaborative effort to transition the facilities into an arts and recreational center for the surrounding communities by providing or leasing space to tenants. The complex provides swimming and aquatic fitness programs for everyone from toddlers to seniors and serves as a home for several community sports teams and leagues, including the Plymouth Steelers football and Our Lady of Good Counsel teams. The facility offers unique space for art classes and studio rentals, too.

"PARC has afforded the Michigan Philharmonic the opportunity to share space with numerous other arts and recreation organizations- all under one roof," said Beth Stewart, executive director of the Michigan Philharmonic. "The energy and activity around here is wonderful and showcases the vibrant arts and culture scene we have here in our community."

Art Formed by PARC is another organization contributing to the artistic energy at the facility. A non-profit open community art studio offering workshops, classes, teen and ladies' nights, pottery, a woodshop, materials and tools, flexible hours and rates and digital media access are all available. Art Formed shares and supports the PARC vision to enhance and enrich the lives of the Plymouth community members through arts and recreation, according to Founder/President Cassandra Uphaus.

Community volunteer opportunities are available at PARC. The organization is always looking for dedicated individuals take part in preserving and maintaining the historic building, organizers said.

Interested individual or groups are encouraged to join the PEP SQUAD (People Excited about PARC) and volunteers with various skills are always welcome to work with PARC on certain projects and days. Additional volunteer sign up and program information can be found at plymouthparc.com.

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Returning champ?

College team, advisor hope to repeat wins in ice carving competitions

Mother Nature may be responsible for the ice carving champions at the Plymouth Ice Festival this year.

Returning champion Jeff Lao, an adjunct professor in the culinary program at Henry Ford Community College, said this year the warmer temperatures will be a serious factor in the carvings.

"I think it will depend on who understands the ice and knows how to work with it in warmer weather," Lao said.

Lao serves as the advisor to the Ice Carving Club at Henry Ford and the team swept the individual competition last year. Steve McCormick took first place honors with his ice sculpture of a dragonfly and club president Robert Speeks won second place with his ice sculpture of a turtle dove. Club member Mark Tapakes won third place with his creation of a rat king, wearing a crown and holding a scepter laden with a piece of cheese.

See **Champs,** page 14

Jeff Lao at work on a sculpture.

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Champs from page 13

Lao won the 2015 Dueling Chain Saw competition when carvers are presented with a block of ice and have 15 minutes to create a sculpture. Lao's creation of a turtle was chosen unanimously by the judges who awarded second place honors to Henry Ford alumnus Chris Burnash whose creation of SpongeBob Squarepants was a crowd pleaser.

The Henry Ford team also created a huge sculpture of a mythical kraken rising from the ocean, using 24 blocks of ice last year. They also were responsible for the sculpture of the Red Wings logo, a roasted pig, a martini glass and a superhero.

Lao said that the team success last year was helped by the perfect carving conditions. "The temperatures were exactly where we wanted them last year," he said.

While the competing team members were not finalized at press time, Lao said that this year, he expected a team of five carvers from the club to participate. McCormick, who is the club president this year, will return, Lao said, as will Tampakes, who serves as vice-president of the club and Speeks who is the tools and equipment officer of the club.

Lao said that tentatively participating this year are Angelina Adkins, the public relations director for the club and Jayme Slais, a culinary arts major at the school.

Planned carvings this year, Lao said, include a chameleon, a preying mantis and an abstract phoenix, among some other ideas the club members have.

Lao, who began his educational career in advertising, transferred to the Henry Ford Culinary Arts program when he made the decision to change career goals. He has been carving for about 6 years, he said, after his faculty advisor noticed a number of art classes in his educational resume and suggested he give it a try.

He's been at it ever since, he said.

"This is an art form that depends totally on how much you are willing to put into it," he said, "and how much confidence you have."

When the chain saws are screaming, ice shards flying and the clock ticking away the 15 minutes, Lao said it will be experience, understanding and confidence that determine the winner this year.

The Dueling Chainsaw event takes place in Kellogg Park at 7 p.m. Saturday. The team competitions take place from 9 until noon on Saturday and the individual competitions are planned for 8 a.m. until noon on Sunday.

Winners will be announced and awards presented at 1 p.m. both days.

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Schedule of Events

2016 Plymouth Ice Festival Official Hours of Operation:

Friday, Jan. 8 - 3 p.m. until 10 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 9 - 10 a.m. until 10 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 10 - 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Events:

Friday, Jan. 8

7 p.m.

Opening ceremony and ribbon cutting
The official opening of the 2016 Ice Festival will take place in Kellogg Park. City of Plymouth commission members will be in attendance to help cut the ribbon on the 2016 event.

DFCU Financial Lights the Ice
The Plymouth Ice Festival Ice Garden becomes even more magical at night, as the ice carvings glow with color. Join DFCU Financial and the Plymouth Ice Festival each night as they Light The Ice. The lights will be turned on during the opening ceremony and again each night at 7 p.m.

Community Financial Ice Carving Demonstration
Come watch ice be turned into a wonderful work of art with Community Financial on Jan. 8, immediately following opening ceremony at 7 p.m.

Plymouth Ice Festival Ice Playground
Presented by Kroger
Bring the kids and plenty of film to an all-new attraction at the Plymouth Ice Festival. The Ice Playground presented by Kroger is full of interactive ice carvings. There will be plenty of opportunities for photos.

Saturday, Jan. 9

7 p.m.

Dueling Chainsaws
Presented by Ford Motor Co.
Back by popular demand, the Dueling Chainsaws competition when ice carvers are given 15 minutes, one block of ice and their chainsaws to create amazing ice carvings.

Plymouth Community United Way Winter Clothing Drive
The Plymouth Ice Festival and Plymouth Community United Way are joining forces to set the record for the largest amount of winter wear to be collected. Help fill the bed of a pickup truck with new or handmade hats, gloves, and scarves. Your donation will be given to agencies serving the homeless and low-income individuals. Items can be taken to the United Way booth on Penniman Avenue during the Plymouth Ice Festival.

New coats, blankets and socks will also be accepted.

Genisys Credit Union College Carving Competitions
The 2016 Plymouth Ice Festival is proud to partner with local colleges and universities to produce the 34th annual college carving competition in Kellogg Park. Watch live carving by talented college student participants as they compete to win a place on the podium in their sculpture category. All judging is done by experienced and professional judges.

College Individual Carving Competition
Saturday, Jan. 9 - 9 a.m. until noon
College Team Carving Competition
Sunday, Jan. 10 - 8 a.m. until noon
Awards at 1 p.m.

Interactive Ice Sculptures
Get your picture taken with some of the most amazing ice creations around. There are a number of opportunities to take a "selfie" with some remarkable and unique ice sculptures throughout the downtown area in addition to those in Kellogg Park.

Run DTP Plymouth Ice Festival 3 Mile Family Walk/Run
The RunDTP Ice Festival 3-Mile Family Walk/Run will begin with a group photo in the park kitty-corner from Panera Bread at 7:45 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 9 and then the 8:02 a.m. event. The 3-mile route starts and finishes in Kellogg Park to enjoy the ice sculptures before and after the 5 or 7-mile routes.
Sun and Snow Sports will have their doors open and provide music, coffee and hot chocolate. Kids, baby joggers, and dogs all are welcome. No registration required and the event is free. For details, access www.RunDTP.com.

ZUMBA presented by The Z Spot
Chase away the cold with a hot ZUMBA dance party full of sizzling Latin and international music at noon Saturday, Jan. 9 on the Main Stage in Kellogg Park.

Main Stage
The Main Stage features live entertainment, awards ceremonies, presentations and music throughout the weekend of the festival.

Reyka Vodka presents Fire and Ice
See two basic elements of our world light up the night sky in downtown Plymouth! Fire and ice are combined to create a dazzling display on Friday, Jan. 8 and Saturday, Jan. 9. Towers are lit at approximately 7:30 p.m. and will burn for approximately 2 hours each evening.

Blue Care Network of Michigan Cross Country Zone
presented by Sun and Snow Sports
Bring the family down to Kellogg Park for the opportunity to try cross-country skiing. Seasoned professionals will demonstrate and explain the gear and theory of cross-country skiing - and then give the kids chance to try it for themselves. The ski demonstrations will be open from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. Saturday and from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Sunday.

The Hot Spot Heated
By Ehlers Heating & Air Conditioning
Warm up in style at the Hot Spot, heated by Ehlers Heating and Air Conditioning. Located under The Gathering directly across from Kellogg Park. The Hot spot features local vendors, businesses, product demonstrations, a sitting area to take a load off your feet and, most importantly, lots of heat. The Hot Spot is open during all of the official open hours of the Ice Festival.

Amazing Festival Food
Enjoy festival favorites like elephant ears, popcorn, roasted almonds and hot chocolate. All food sales on-site can be enjoyed in the warmth of the Warming Station where tables and chairs are provided all weekend long. Looking for a meal indoors? There are so many wonderful options within downtown Plymouth - from fine dining to a quick bite, Plymouth has something for everyone.

Warm up at the Plymouth Library:
A free live performance from the Great American Songbook is planned for 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9 at the library, a Michigan Opera Theatre Community Production. Performing will be soprano Maria Cimarelli and baritone Mark Vondrak. The pair will be accompanied on keyboard by Amanda Sabelhaus. No reservations or registration is required, it is a drop-in event, library officials said.

The entire family is invited to come into the library and enjoy some hot chocolate, crafts and fun winter activities from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Jan.11. Activities planned are geared to children ages 5-12, but families are welcome.
For more information on the library go to plymouthlibrary.org and for additional information on the Ice Festival visit plymouthicefestival.com
The library is located at 223 S. Main St. Library hours during the festival will be 9:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. Friday, 9:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. Saturday and noon until 5 p.m. Sunday.

Party Lot at E.G. Nick's
Presented by Labatt Blue, Svedka Vodka
For the biggest party in downtown Plymouth, head over to the E.G. Nick's Party Lot for cold beer, drink specials, and live music from Big Ray and the Motor City Kings from 8 p.m. until midnight Friday and Saturday. The Party Lot, which opens at 7 p.m., has become the place to be for the evening crowd. The traditional Ice Bar will again be open on the front patio at E.G. Nick's on Forest Avenue featuring Svedka Vodka specialties.

Movies at the Penn Theater:
The historic Penn Theater will feature movies at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 9 and at 4:45 and 7 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday.

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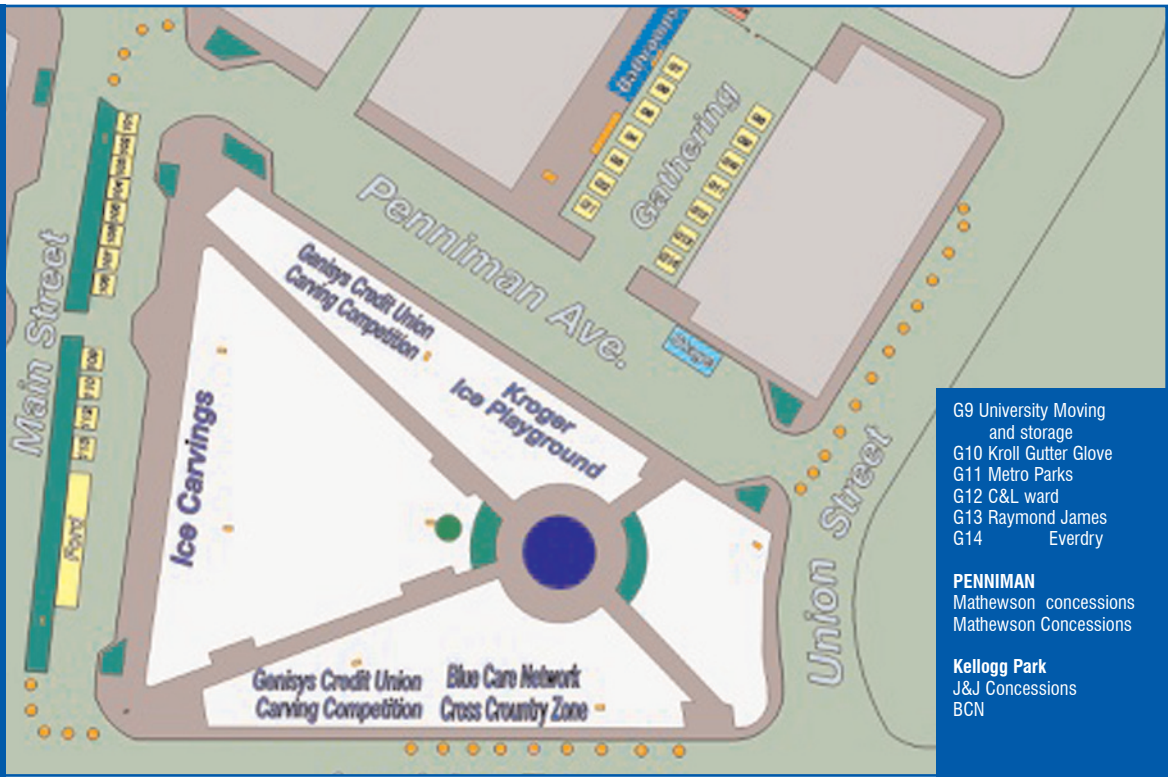

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Party time

Traditional Party Lot, Ice Bar will again attract festival visitors

They know how to party.

"We've learned exactly what people want and what they expect from us at these events, and we do our very best to deliver," noted Frank Agostini of E.G. Nick's restaurant where, once again, the annual Party Lot will be open during the 34th Annual Ice Festival, along with the famous Svedka Ice Bar.

It is a literal ice bar, carved from two huge blocks of ice where the staff at the restaurant serves ice cold vodka drinks during the festival. This year, Agostini has also added an "ice lounge" where folks can come in from the bar and enjoy their drinks in an après-ski lounge atmosphere.

"It's just something different we thought people would like. They can come in out of the cold and still be near the ice bar and enjoy their drinks and the experience," Agostini said. The ice bar began as a novelty several years ago and has grown in popularity every year. "It's just fun," Agostini said, "and after the holidays, when everybody is so busy, we all need a little fun."

> *"It's just fun," Agostini said, "and after the holidays, when everybody is so busy, we all need a little fun.*

Fun will also dominate the rear of E.G. Nick's where, as has become an annual tradition, the Party Tent will open at 7 Friday night with live music from Big Ray and the Motor City Kings beginning at 8 p.m. and continuing until midnight.

"We've had this band several times and the crowds really enjoy them," Agostini said. "We decided to bring them back both nights of the festival because they are so popular." Big

See **Party,** page 20

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Library offers 'Great American Songbook' concert

The Friends of the Plymouth District Library are bringing something special to the Ice Festival again this year.

"We were delighted to join in the festivities last year, " explained Library Director Carol Souchock. "We are anxious to welcome folks back to the library for the upcoming festival."

A free live performance from the Great American Songbook is planned for 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9 at the library, a Michigan Opera Theatre Community Production. Performing will be soprano Maria Cimarelli and baritone Mark Vondrak. The pair will be accompanied on keyboard by Amanda Sabelhaus.

No reservations or registration is required, it is a drop-in event, library officials said.

The entire family is invited to come into the library and enjoy some hot chocolate, crafts and fun winter activities from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Jan.11. Activities planned are geared to children ages 5-12, but families are welcome.

For more information on the library go to plymouthlibrary.org and for additional information on the Ice Festival visit plymouthicefestival.com

The library is located at 223 S. Main St.

For more information, call (734) 453-0750.

Party from page 19

Ray and the Motor City Kings will play again Saturday night, beginning at 8, Agostini said. Again this year, there will be a $3 cover charge at the tent which will be donated to the Plymouth-Canton Vietnam Veterans organization.

"That has been a really ideal situation," Agostini said. "We get to enjoy the party, the music, have some drinks and help these guys at the same time. This is a great way for us to show our respect and repay the debt we all owe these men and women," he added.

"Everybody here has a great time at the Ice Festival. The whole staff enjoys the energy and the excitement of the weekend and I think that brings people back to the tent and the ice bar every year.

"We just have a great time."

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Tasty treats

New General Store to offer warming stations, late hours

Kim Kelp is preparing for a lot of visitors to her recently-opened shop during the Ice Festival.

Kelp and her husband, Rick, have planned a warming station in the rear entrance to the new Plymouth General Store where they will offer heat, hot chocolate and Wassail (an English drink made of hot apple cider and orange juice) to festival visitors. At the front entrance, off Forest Street, they plan to set up a fire pit where crowds can roast marshmallows and even make S'mores.

And on Friday and Saturday night, the hand-held U.P. Pasties that the couple has been making in their Main Street shop for five years will be available.

"We're going to have hot pasties all night," Kim Kelp said, "and I hope people come on over."

The new shop is the latest venture for the couple who have owned U. P. Pasties located on Main Street for about five years. They needed a larger kitchen to produce the nearly 3,500 pasties they sell every week. Demand for the hand-made pies is increasing and Kelp hopes to double her sales with the larger kitchen at the new spot. The pasties, which are either traditional beef (made with top sirloin), vegetarian (potato, carrot and rutabaga) or white chicken breast are certified as authentic by Greenfield Village and

See **Pasties,** page 24

Kim and Rick Kelp

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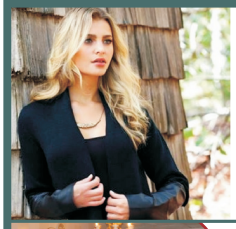

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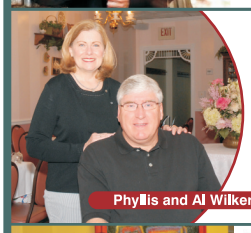

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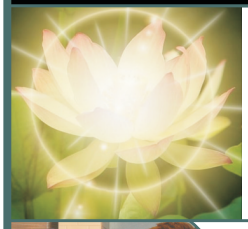

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Pasties from page 22

The Henry Ford and the vegetables are prepared by hand every day. The large pasties will also be available during the festival and Kelp said she plans to keep her shop open until midnight both Friday and Saturday night to cater to the crowds who will be enjoying the live music in the Party Tent outside E.G. Nick's, which is in the parking lot the businesses share and practically next door.

The Plymouth General Store also features home-style pasta from The Pasta Shop, homemade candies and desserts from Sweet Leilani's, the famous Achatz pies, treats from the Beirut Bakery and pastries from Holy Cannolis.

Kelp also sells floral arrangements from The Vines in Farmington and cards and photos from Wright Design Card Co.

United effort

Organization hopes to set record for clothing donations

The Plymouth Ice Festival, Blackwell Ford, and Plymouth Community United Way are partnering to set the record for the largest amount of new winter wear to be collected for those in need. United Way hopes to collect enough winter clothing to fill the bed of a new F-150 pick up truck from Blackwell Ford with new, or handmade, hats, gloves, and scarves.

Donations will be given to agencies serving the homeless and low-income individuals in the area. Donors can bring items to the Plymouth Community United Way booth on Penniman Avenue and Main Street during the Ice Festival, Jan. 8-10.

New coats, blankets and socks will also be accepted and donors will be entered in drawings to win some great prizes, United Way organizers said.

Plymouth Community United Way will also be hosting an open house/warming station from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9 in the office located at 960 W. Ann Arbor Trail, Suite 2. There will be a hot cocoa bar and some treats available for visitors.

For more information, call Randi Williams at (734) 453-6879, ext. 7 or e-mail randi.williams@pcuw.org.

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A taste of our town

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Among the many amenities that attract visitors and local residents alike are the unique restaurants that line the downtown streets and neighboring areas.

These restaurants cater to local folks who know where to find the very best in dining and attract visitors who return to Plymouth to meet for dinner or lunch with friends or for family celebrations.

Every year, the annual festivals bring people to the community and many return time and again to enjoy the local restaurants and the amenities the town uniquely offers.

Among our favorites:

Aqua Fine Dining
413 North Main St.
Plymouth
(734)335-7474

One of the newest and most modern restaurants in Plymouth is Aqua, located on North Main Street. The new dining establishment has been open for about a year and a half and offers modern, Eurasian cuisine under the watchful eye and direction of Executive Chef John.

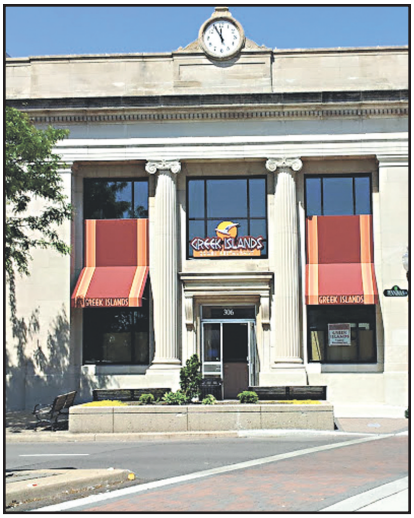
Everything fresh, every day is the philosophy at Aqua where each menu item is prepared to order using only the very freshest ingredients, meats and produce. The Aqua kitchen does not use microwaves or freezers.

Monday nights Aqua offers a Tour of Greece menu and Happy Hours take place from 3-6 p.m. and again from 9 p.m. until closing every night.

The ultra modern bar offers Aqua signature craft cocktails, draft and bottled beers, liquor and a great wine selection. The restaurant also features unique sushi/sashimi and hosts Half-off Sushi Wednesdays, when diners pay half price for sushi rolls.

The restaurant is divided by the formal dining room, black-glass topped full-service bar, cocktail area and all-season ultra lounge/patio. The ultra lounge is available for reservations for private parties, birthdays or corporate luncheons. Private parking is available on site. Aqua is open from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. Monday through Friday, form noon until midnight Saturday and from noon until 10 p.m. on Sunday.

Greek Islands
306 South Main St.
Plymouth
(734) 335-6303



The Greek Island Coney Restaurant located downtown on Main Street across from Kellogg Park is not just a typical Coney Island, although the Coneys made at Greek Island have rapidly become the favorite of many locals.

The menu includes American favorites along with many homemade Greek specialties including moussaka, pastitsio, spinach pie and gyros. They also serve a wide array of salads, pitas, sandwiches and burgers, all at great prices. Recently, several new items have been added to the menu.

The restaurant offers carry outs and has a banquet room and offers catering.

The remodeled interior with paintings on the high ceilings always draws admiring comments from visitors and the atmosphere is always friendly and welcoming. The wait staff is always prompt and courteous and locals have come to depend on the quick service. Greek Islands is also family friendly, offering accommodations for children and families.

There is additional parking behind the restaurant.

Hermann's Old Town Grille
195 West Liberty St.
Plymouth
(734) 451-1213

For a real taste of Plymouth, Hermann's simply cannot be missed. From the long bar of regulars to the back room where crowds gather, this is the place for friendly banter and wonderful food.

The tavern, located in Plymouth Old Village, serves a menu full of specialty burgers, fresh salads, oven-baked pizza and unique sandwiches, all made to order.

The OTB (Old Town Burger) comes in a variety of configurations, all of which have made Hermann's famous.

Owners Nick and Sally Hermann provide good food and a very comfortable atmosphere where people can really enjoy themselves and relax. Hermann's, which is identified by the large drooling moose painted on the outside of the building, is also available for parties, birthdays and other special events with an emphasis on fun.

Hermann's is a Plymouth tradition, beloved by regulars and a treat for visitors.

Hermann's is open from 11 a.m. until 2 a.m. Monday through Saturday and from noon until 2 a.m. Sundays.

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Welcome to Herman's Olde Town Grille. Nick Hermann opened the OTG in September 2003. Since then, Nick and his family have worked to create a neighborhood bar and grill that the people of Plymouth can enjoy. Hermann's goal is to provide good food, good service, a friendly atmosphere and good times for their customers.

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E.G. Nick's
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One of the most popular places in town is always E.G. Nick's on Forest Street where owners Tony Belli and Frank Agostini want everyone to have a good time.

"We hope everybody comes by during the Ice Festival to enjoy the live music and the Party Lot in the back parking lot during the weekend," Agostini said. "That's what we're here for."

This year, Big Ray and the Motor City Kings will entertain in the tent beginning at 8 p.m. both Friday and Saturday night. There will be a $3 cover charge at the tent both nights which will be donated to the Plymouth Canton Vietnam Veterans group.

There will be beer, wine and mixed drinks served in the tent both Friday

and Saturday nights, he added.. E.G. Nick's will also be the site of the famous Svedka Ice Bar on what is usually the front patio. This year, it has been converted into a lodge where folks can sit down and enjoy the specialty drinks from the bar carved completely from ice.

E.G. Nick's has become one of the favorite restaurants in the area offering American cuisine with a bit of a twist. The new individual specialty pizzas on a unique crust are what many feel pizza really ought to be and the unique pear and spinach salad has been attracting the lunch crowd.

The planked whitefish at E.G. Nick's has been named the best in the state by food critics and the ribs are also award winners.

"We keep the favorites that people love and try to add some new, updated current items to the menu, to keep it fresh," Agostini said.

Visitors also enjoy the display of celebrity memorabilia, guitars and photos tastefully displayed in E.G. Nick's where many diners have discovered celebrities sitting in the next booth or at the longest bar in Plymouth, where a full menu of specialty cocktails and huge selection of beers is available.

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The Inn at St. John's
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at Sheldon Road
Plymouth
(734) 414-0600

The Inn at St. John's is a Plymouth jewel. This breathtaking landmark is the premier location for overnight stays, gourmet dining, corporate conferences, weddings, receptions, executive meetings, charity galas, and golf outings

For an inspired dining experience in a chic, inviting atmosphere, make a date at 5ive Restaurant, located off the hotel lobby. Diners can enjoy an award-winning wine list, extensive offering of local brews and al fresco dining on the terrace in season. 5ive Restaurant is open daily, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Reservations at: (734) 357-5700 or www.opentable.com.

For a napkin-testing burger, visit the

vintage diner-style Burger Loft, located above The Inn at St. John's Pro Shop. Making burger history since summer 2013. The Burger Loft offers crisp salads, house-cut fries, and, of course, burgers done right. The Open during golf season from 4-9 p.m. on Mondays, and from 11:30 a.m. until 9 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. The loft is closed Sundays.

Karl's Cabin
6005 Gotfredson Road
Plymouth
(734) 455-8450

Built in the 1940s, Karl's Cabin is truly a Michigan Made log cabin roadhouse restaurant, bar and grill. Located just minutes west of downtown Plymouth and just east of Ann Arbor, the restaurant is a favorite of patrons from throughout the area.

Guests can enjoy rustic charm, friendly service and a large menu including hand-cut grilled steaks, fresh seafood, BBQ, fresh pasta, big salads, burgers, artisan sandwiches and daily chef-created features. Slow roasted prime rib is served every Friday and Saturday night. Dinners are priced from $8 to $20 while lunch prices range from $6 to $15.

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The Detroit Free Press

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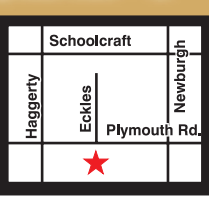
www.labistecca.net
Reservations Suggested



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Open 24 Hrs. Wed.-Sat.
41496 Ann Arbor Rd.
Plymouth
(734) 416-8200

Karl's offers 20 Michigan craft beers on draft including Bell's, Founders and Short's. The extensive wine list includes 60 wines to choose from with many wines from Michigan.

Karl's has an outdoor patio and entertainment includes dueling pianos and live bands on weekends.

Karl's also offers several specialty evenings including wine and beer dinners and other themed events.

Reservations are recommended.

LaBistecca Italian Grille
39405 Plymouth Road
Plymouth
(734) 254-0400

LaBistecca, a premier steak house and a favorite of diners throughout the area, offers a unique dining experience featuring Piedmontese Beef, which is recommended by the American Heart Association, exclusively. The succulent and tender steaks bring area diners back again and again. Piedmontese Beef is famous for flavor and texture while having much less fat than regular beef. It offers all the enjoyment of fine steak without the guilt, owners noted.

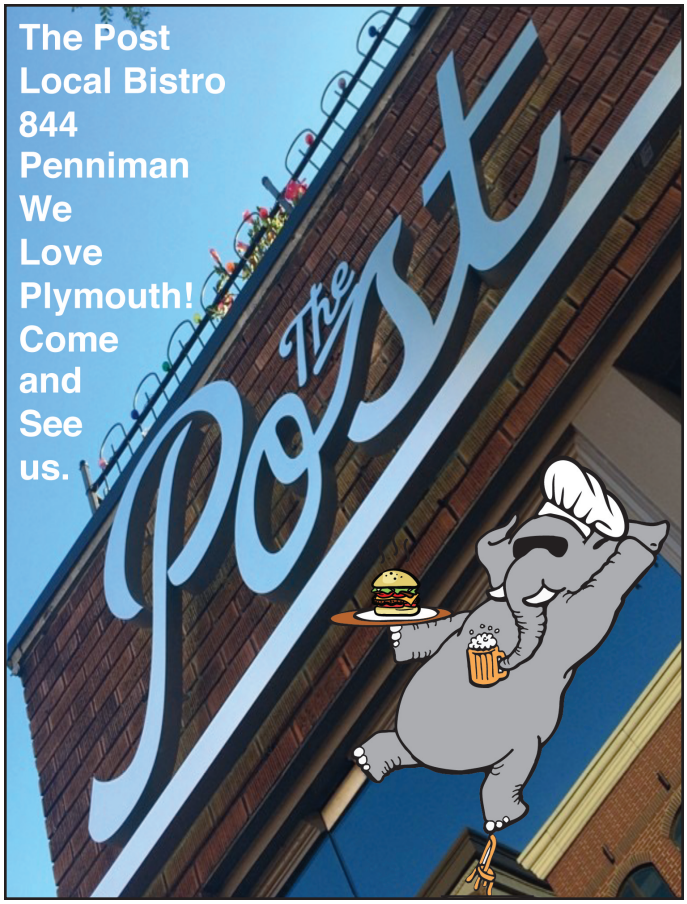
An award-winning Wine Spectator wine list at LaBistecca is certain to please every palate as diners relax in a well-appointed dining room and lounge. The restaurant is famous for offering a fine dining experience in a relaxed, yet elegant, atmosphere.

Service is always excellent by a well-trained staff familiar with the menu and able to answer any questions diners might have.

Live entertainment begins at 7:30 p.m. in the lounge Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Dinner is served beginning at 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and lunch service begins at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Reservations are recommended as this is one of the most popular places in the area with a well-earned reputation for excellence and superior quality.



Leo's Coney Island
41496 Ann Arbor Road
Plymouth, Mi
(734) 416-8200

The family recipe for the famous Greek Salad dressing along with the chili and other great homemade items has been the backbone of success for Leo's Coney Island. The Stassinopoulos brothers, Leo and Pete, have built a reputation for quality food and service.

Leo's Coney Island has evolved from a limited menu offering the basics of Coney Islands, fries, burgers and Greek Salads to a wide menu. Selections include a full line of items for the whole family including Greek specialties, breakfast, and a children's menu. Today, Leo's Famous Greek Salad Dressing can be found in specialty markets and local grocery stores. However, throughout the years, Leo's has not strayed from the formula of serving the highest-quality products and giving great service to customers. Leo has made it his mission to provide the experience of a Coney Island, while also offering delicious homemade soups and family favorites.

Leo's is open from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m. Sunday through Tuesday and 24 hours Wednesday through Saturdays.

Station 885
885 Starkweather
Old Village, Plymouth
(734) 459-0885

Station 885 has become a tradition throughout the Plymouth area. After nearly three decades of serving great meals to families, they are obviously on the right track, according to owner Rob Costanza.

The Costanza family prides themselves on a fresh menu but never forgets the traditional dishes which have made Station 885 part of countless family events and celebrations during the past 30 years. They serve fresh Mama Mucci pasta and hand-cut steaks along with a selection of fresh fish and great salads.

Every Monday through Wednesday, the restaurant offers half-off prices on bottles of wine and there are dinner specials from the kitchen nightly.

The restaurant is located adjacent to the railroad tracks in historic Old Village and the theme seems appropriate.

Youngsters of all ages are always delighted when the bell sounds for an oncoming train passing by. The electric model trains also add a special ambiance

Station 885 is open from 11 a.m. until midnight Monday through Thursday and from 11 a.m. until 1 a.m. on Friday and Saturday.

The restaurant also offers a special Sunday Brunch from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. which includes various breakfast items along with prime rib, fresh shrimp, salads, fruits and made-to-order crepes and omelets.

Station 885 offers live entertainment beginning at 7 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and has banquet facilities for parties from 20-80 guests.

The Post Local Bistro
844 Penniman
Plymouth,
(313) 319-7070

The Post Local Bistro loves Plymouth.

JT and Jen, from the original Post in Detroit, agree that they love the new Plymouth spot. The pair, along with their incredible staff, have become favorites with patrons who claim they are "always friendly, laughing and hard working."

Chef Dave offers a creative bistro-style lunch and dinner menu each day which features fresh ingredients from local merchants. There is also a drink menu filled with Michigan craft beers, specialty drinks and a carefully selected wine list.

Happy hours are 3-6:30 p.m. daily. Live entertainment is featured Wednesday and Thursday nights and the Post DJs entertains every Friday and Saturday night.

The Post opened in February 2014 and has been warmly welcomed by the community.

Sunday brunch, lunch, happy hour, dinner or late night, there is always a good time at The Post.

The Post opens at 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday and at 11 a.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

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